

Peak District National Park Authority
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DE45 1AE

please reply to:
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steve.jones@railfuture.org.uk

2025-12-20

Dear Sir / Madam,

Peak District National Park Local Plan 2045 - Preferred Approach

Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established national independent voluntary organisation campaigning for a bigger and better railway network for passenger and freight users.

This response draws together the views of the East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and North West branches. It is confined to the Travel and Transport section of the Peak District National Park Authority's *Local Plan Review Preferred Approach* consultation:

- Railfuture recognises that the Authority is not a transport planning body, but, for a body overseeing an area half the size of Derbyshire, we look to the Authority to continue to promote opportunities for visitors to preferentially use public transport to visit the Park. This should be more strongly emphasised in the Local Plan. (Draft Policy Direction 22, 23)
- The control and reduction of road traffic flows surely remains a priority, and an increasingly urgent one, given the steadily increasing numbers of visitors (McKinsey 2021) and vehicle traffic generated by arrivals who see no realistic public transport alternative to the use of a car.
- In the context of Draft Policy Direction 22 and Policy 62, we believe that rail offers a scalable and robust alternative to the strong preference for car by the majority of today's visitors. Railfuture will therefore continue to lend support to:
 - MEMRAP's campaign for the reinstatement of the Peaks and Dales Line between Matlock and Buxton and Chinley;
 - Measures to increase provision along the sole existing rail route into the Park, Northern's stopping service between Sheffield and Manchester;
 - Improved bus connectivity to existing railway stations; see next paragraph.
- Bus and cycling play an important and expanding role in visitor access to the Park. Railfuture is keen to see further improved bus connectivity into the Park. Of particular note are:
 - The recently strengthened 170 bus service, connecting Chesterfield station to Chatsworth and Bakewell;
 - TransPeak services between Derby and Buxton, linking into the National Park with rail services to Buxton (Northern) and Matlock (East Midlands Railway).

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www.railwatch.org.uk

We see other stations not far outside the Park boundary as having a valuable 'gateway hub' role by means of connecting bus services. Such stations include Greenfield, Marsden, Sheffield, Stockport and Macclesfield among others, including those on the line to Buxton, plus more bus service connectivity from Chesterfield. To be effective, such bus services must connect properly with trains, with timetables designed accordingly. (Policy 61)

- For walking and cycling access to the Park, there should be greater emphasis and encouragement for rail access via 'gateway' stations in much the same way as for bus connectivity. Rail should play a greater role as an alternative to the car for such visitors. (Draft Policy Direction 22, Policy 62)
- We also want to see a significant increase in moving freight onto rail to reduce the detrimental impact of road haulage within the Park. Although some of the sources of freight are outside the Park boundaries, they do have an impact on road traffic within the Park. (Policy 60 especially para B)

Whilst recognising that a viable replacement Monsal Trail active travel network must be available, Railfuture urges the National Park Authority to reconsider its intention to cease to protect the route for possible future rail use. **We therefore oppose any removal of the safeguarding of former railway corridors for possible future rail use. We recommend that the Authority does not remove the present Policy safeguarding for railway routes.** (Policy 61, Policy 62 Justification.)

If you have any queries about any of this, please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

Steve Jones

Secretary – East Midlands Branch

Railfuture – Campaigning for better services over a bigger rail network

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